

1 WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

5 1. A method for substituting alternative video and/or audio signals and/or graphics and/or text to be displayed on the viewer's television display monitor in the place of the video and/or audio signals that would otherwise be displayed according to the channel to which the viewer has tuned the television set, the television set including an electronic program guide, the method comprising the steps of:

10 maintaining at a head end provider viewer profile data based on user interactions with the electronic program guide;

15 monitoring at the head end provider an outgoing television signal for a first particular channel;

identifying the point in said outgoing television signal at which said signal begins to carry advertising information;

20 inserting in said outgoing television signal on said first particular channel an instruction to any television that receives said television signal to change channels to a second particular channel;

receiving said television signal at a viewer's television set on said first particular channel;

recognizing said instruction at said viewer's television set to change channels;

25 determining whether the television set is operating in an electronic program guide mode;

tuning said viewer's television set to said second particular channel if the television set is operating in the electronic program guide mode; and

30 tuning said viewer's television set to said first particular channel.

35 2. The method of claim 1, wherein said instruction to change channels includes a duration of time and the television

1 set is tuned to the second particular channel for said duration  
of time.

5 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the second channel is  
an advertisement channel providing advertisement information.

10 4. The method of claim 3 further comprising the step of  
displaying the advertisement information on a pre-determined  
portion of the electronic program guide.

15 5. A system for substituting alternative video and/or  
audio signals and/or graphics and/or text to be displayed on the  
viewer's television display monitor in the place of the video  
and/or audio signals that would otherwise be displayed according  
to the channel to which the viewer has tuned the television set,  
the television set including an electronic program guide, the  
system comprising:

20 means for maintaining at a head end provider viewer profile  
data based on user interactions with the electronic program  
guide;

means at the head end provider to monitor an outgoing  
television signal for a first particular channel;

25 means to identify the point in said outgoing television  
signal at which said signal begins to carry advertising  
information;

30 means to insert in said outgoing television signal on said  
first particular channel an instruction to any television that  
receives said television signal to change channels to a second  
particular channel;

means to receive said television signal on said first  
particular channel;

means for determining whether the television set is  
operating in an electronic program guide mode;

1 means at a viewer's television set to tune to said second particular channel if the television set is operating in the electronic program guide mode; and

5 means at said viewer's television set to tune to said first particular channel.

10 6. The system of claim 5, wherein the instruction to change channels includes a duration of time and the television set is tuned to the second particular channel for said duration of time.

15 7. The system of claim 5, wherein the second channel is an advertisement channel providing advertisement information.

20 8. The system of claim 7 further comprising means for displaying the advertisement information on a pre-determined portion of the electronic program guide.

25 9. A method for replacing television signals in a television system including a television set and an electronic program guide, the method comprising:

maintaining a plurality of advertisement channels, each advertisement channel providing different advertisement information;

collecting viewer profile data based on user interactions with the electronic program guide;

selecting an advertisement channel based on the collected viewer profile data;

30 monitoring an outgoing television signal for a particular television channel;

identifying a point in the outgoing television signal for transmitting advertisement information;

35 inserting in the outgoing television signal for the particular television channel an instruction to change channels;

1 tuning to the particular television channel;  
receiving the instruction to change channels;  
determining whether the television set is operating in an  
5 electronic guide mode; and

tuning to the selected advertisement channel for a duration  
of the advertisement carried by the selected advertisement  
channel if the television set is operating in the electronic  
guide mode.

10 10. The method of claim 9 further comprising collecting  
viewer profile data based on user interactions with the  
television system.

15 11. The method of claim 9 further comprising transmitting  
the collected viewer profile data to a head end provider.

20 12. The method of claim 9 wherein the instruction to change  
channels comprises an instruction to change to the selected  
advertisement channel.

25 13. The method of claim 9 further comprising:  
receiving a user command to change to a specific television  
channel prior to the expiration of the duration of the  
advertisement carried by the selected advertisement channel;  
tuning to the specific television channel; and  
remaining tuned to the specific television channel after the  
expiration of the duration of the advertisement.

30 14. The method of claim 9 further comprising displaying the  
advertisement information on a pre-determined portion of the  
electronic program guide.

1  
15. The method of claim 9 further comprising tuning to the particular television channel at an expiration of the duration of the advertisement.

5  
16. A system for replacing television signals in a television system including a television set and an electronic program guide, the system comprising:

10 means for maintaining a plurality of advertisement channels, each advertisement channel providing different advertisement information;

means for collecting viewer profile data based on user interactions with the electronic program guide;

15 a head end monitor monitoring an outgoing television signal for a particular television channel and inserting an instruction to change channels at a point in the outgoing television signal where advertisement information is to be transmitted;

20 a television signal receiver including a tuner tuning to the particular television channel, the receiver receiving the instruction to change channels;

25 a microprocessor coupled to the television signal receiver, the microprocessor determining whether the television set is operating in an electronic guide mode and causing the tuner to tune to the selected advertisement channel for a duration of the advertisement carried by the selected advertisement channel if the television set is operating in the electronic guide mode.

30 17. The system of claim 16 further comprising means for collecting viewer profile data based on user interactions with the television system.

35 18. The system of claim 16 further comprising means for transmitting the collected viewer profile data to a head end provider.

1           19. The system of claim 16 further comprising:  
            a user input device for selecting a specific television  
channel for viewing;

5           wherein the microprocessor causes the tuner to tune to the  
specific television channel upon receipt of the user selection  
prior to the expiration of the duration of the advertisement  
carried by the selected advertisement channel and remain tuned  
to the specific television channel after the expiration of the  
10          duration of the advertisement.

15          20. The system of claim 16 wherein the microprocessor  
causes the advertisement carried by the selected advertisement  
channel to be displayed on a pre-determined portion of the  
electronic program guide.

20          21. The system of claim 16, wherein the microprocessor  
causes the tuner to tune to the particular television channel at  
an expiration of the duration of the advertisement.

25          22. A television system including a television set and an  
electronic program guide for replacing television signals, the  
system comprising:

            means for collecting viewer profile data based on user  
interactions with the electronic program guide;

            a television signal receiver including a tuner tuning to the  
particular television channel, the receiver receiving an  
instruction to change channels;

30           a memory storing advertisement schedule information for a  
plurality of advertisements, the information including a channel  
designation for each of the advertisements;

35           a microprocessor coupled to the memory and the television  
signal receiver, the microprocessor determining whether the  
television set is operating in an electronic guide mode,  
selecting an advertisement channel based on the collected viewer

1 profile data if the television set is operating in electronic  
guide mode, and causing the tuner to tune to the advertisement  
channel for a duration of the advertisement carried by the  
5 selected advertisement channel.

23. The system of claim 22 further comprising means for  
collecting viewer profile data based on user interactions with  
the television system.

10 24. The system of claim 22, wherein the microprocessor  
causes the advertisement carried by the selected advertisement  
channel to be displayed on a pre-determined portion of the  
electronic program guide.

15 25. The system of claim 22, wherein the microprocessor  
causes the tuner to tune to tune to the particular television  
channel at an expiration of the duration of the advertisement.

20 26. A system for replacing television signals, the system  
comprising:

a television signal receiver including a tuner tuning to a  
first television channel, the receiver receiving an instruction  
to change channels to a second channel;

25 a display monitor for displaying an electronic program guide  
while in an electronic program guide mode;

30 a processor coupled to the television signal receiver and  
display monitor, characterized in that the processor determines  
whether the display monitor is displaying the electronic program  
guide in the electronic program guide mode, causes the tuner to  
tune to the second channel upon receipt of the instruction to  
change channels if the display monitor is displaying the  
electronic guide in the electronic program guide mode, and  
further causes the display monitor to display content carried by

35

1 the second channel on a pre-determined portion of the electronic  
program guide.

5 27. A system for replacing television signals, the system  
comprising:

a television signal receiver including a tuner tuning to a  
first television channel;

10 a display monitor displaying contents of the first  
television channel;

a memory storing an indicia indicating whether contents of  
the first television channel displayed on the display monitor are  
to be replaced; and

15 a processor coupled to the signal receiver, display, and  
memory, characterized in that the processor checks the indicia  
to determine whether the contents of the first television channel  
displayed on the display monitor are to be replaced, and replaces  
the displayed contents with a second content if the indicia  
indicates that the displayed contents are to be replaced.

20 28. The system of claim 27, wherein the second content is  
an advertisement selected based on user profile information.